

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 5 with the following:

In accordance with the present invention, the semiconductor substrate or wafer is applied onto a transportable electrostatic ~~carrier~~ chuck and the semiconductor substrate or wafer remains on the electrostatic ~~carrier~~ chuck for the duration of and between at least two processing steps.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 10 with the following:

Consequently, the present invention provides a method which avoids the problems described above by using a transportable ~~carrier~~ chuck or substrate carrier; in ~~the prior art this document~~, such substrate carriers are called transfer-ESC. The wafer is applied onto the transfer-ESC and remains on the transfer-ESC while the thickness of the wafer is reduced during some or all further processing steps, intermediate storage, for example, until the individual structural elements are separated or

the structural elements or wafers are removed for packaging.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 2 with the following:

A transportable electrostatic ~~carrier~~ chuck suitable for the purpose of the invention must fully or partially meet the following requirements:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 5 with the following:

The holding force must be similarly high as in vacuum holders conventionally used for fixing wafers in polishing machines for reducing the thickness of wafers (up to about  $0.1 \text{ N/mm}^2$ ). Therefore, the electrostatic ~~carrier~~ chuck must have a holding force which is as high as possible because of the high shearing forces during the polishing process. For this reason, the use of unipolar electrostatic ~~carriers~~ chucks is the method of choice, if other arguments make it not necessary to use bipolar electrostatic ~~carriers~~ chucks, for example, because of the difficult charging and discharging.

**PR-39**

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 13 with the following:

Because of the above-mentioned requirements, suitable materials of the dielectric of the transportable electrostatic ~~carrier chuck~~, in addition to plastic films, are preferably ceramic materials, for example, quartz, glass, aluminum oxide, titanium oxide, barium titanate.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 5 with the following:

The method according to the present invention described above and the electrostatic ~~carrier chuck~~ system and also the described transportable electrostatic transfer-ESC is preferably used for manipulating the wafer when the thickness of the wafer is reduced.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 10 with the following:

Additional fields of use of this method and of the manipulating system are in all those situations in which, for

economical as well as technical reasons, it is advantageous to use transportable electrostatic ~~carriers~~ chucks which are capable of maintaining the electrostatic power for a long period of time without continuously requiring a stationary electric recharging. For example, the physical/chemical analysis of the wafers must be mentioned.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 9 with the following:

3. The transfer-ESC is electrically charged and thereby fixes or secures the wafer whose thickness is to be reduced; subsequently, the transfer-ESC is placed with the fixed wafer either in wafer carriers or is directly transported for reducing the thickness to further processing machines, for example, polishing or etching machines.